

# **U.S. Embassy Podgorica, Montenegro**

## **Disposition of Remains Report**

### **Name of Country**

Montenegro

### **Embassy information**

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[Country Information Travel Advisory](#)

[Register with the U.S. Embassy](#)

### **Profile of Religions of the Host Country and Religious Services available to visitors.**

Country Profile: Visit the State Department's U.S. Relations with Montenegro page:

<https://www.state.gov/u-s-relations-with-montenegro/>

Orthodox (generally belonging to either the Serbian Orthodox Church or Montenegrin Orthodox Church) comprise 72 percent of the population, 19.1 percent of the population is Muslim, 3.4 percent Roman Catholic, 1.2 percent atheist, 1.5 other religious communities, 2.6 unspecified. This data is from the 2011 census.

### **Religious Activities for Visitors:**

Most churches in the Podgorica area are Serbian Orthodox, but there are also Roman Catholic and Greek Orthodox churches, Mosques and one Jewish community in Podgorica. English-language services are not commonly available in Podgorica. Exception: The Roman Catholic Church and the Protestant church in Niksic have English-language services.

## **Funeral Directors, Mortician and Related Services Available in the Host Country:**

*DISCLAIMER: The U.S. Embassy in Podgorica, Montenegro assumes no responsibility or liability for the professional ability or reputation of, or the quality of services provided by, the following persons or firms. Names are listed alphabetically, and the order in which they appear has no other significance. Professional credentials and areas of expertise are provided directly by the funeral directors, morticians and other service providers*

### **Assistance Croatia (logistics company)**

\*Partnering with funeral homes from Montenegro

Cell: +385 91 425 2255

Email: [info@assistance-croatia.com](mailto:info@assistance-croatia.com)

Web: <http://www.assistance-croatia.com/#about>

### **BAR**

#### **Funeral Home: “Ivanovic”**

Bjeliši bb, 85000 Bar

Tel: +382 (0)30 315-601

Tel: +382 (0)78 101-023

Cell: +382 (0)69 333-030

Cell: +382 (0)67 565-661

Cell: +382 (0)68 707-080

### **BUDVA**

#### **Public Company “Funeral Services”**

Potkošljun bb, 85310 Budva

Tel: +382 (0)33 458-624

+382 (0)33 458-625

Fax: +382 (0)33 458-627

### **PODGORICA**

#### **Public Company: “Funeral Services”**

Ul. 8. Marta bb; 81000 Podgorica

Tel: +382 (0)20 634-022

Tel: +382 (0)20 662-480

Tel: +382 (0)20 662-481

Fax: +382 (0)20 662-482

Cell: +382 (0)69-279-601

### **HERCEG NOVI**

#### **Funeral Home: “Lazarev kuk”**

Narodnog Fronta 162, 85340, Herceg Novi

Tel: +382 (0)31 348-132

Cell: +382 (0)69 042-156

## **Profile of services available in the host country regarding preparation and shipment of remains**

When a relative or friend dies abroad, the different procedures, laws or language can cause additional distress. You may be uncertain about what to do or who to contact. Please note, as each country has its own laws and customs when a death occurs, it may not be possible to make the arrangements that you prefer, or at the time you would like.

When someone dies in Montenegro and the next of kin is in the U.S. or abroad, Montenegrin authorities normally notify the U.S. Embassy in Podgorica of the death of U.S. citizen. The Embassy will do whatever they can to trace the next of kin as soon as possible and will ask the Montenegrin police to pass on the sad news. However, you might also be notified about the death directly by someone else, for example a local friend of the deceased, a doctor, etc.

### **Next-of-Kin**

A living /spouse/partner/civil partner, a child, a parent, a sibling, or an adult with sufficient relationship to the deceased, will be recognized as next of kin by the authorities. Same sex spouses are recognized under local law and practices as next of kin. In Montenegro it is not normally necessary for the deceased to be identified by the next of kin. If Next of Kin is not present, Consular officer can perform identification if required.

The next of kin of the person who has died will usually need to decide between a local burial, cremation or bringing the person home, which is known as repatriation. Your funeral director will usually be able to explain the options available, the costs, and help you decide. Detailed information can be found below for each category.

### **Insurance**

The next-of-kin should consider checking to see if the deceased purchased a travel insurance policy. If such a policy exists, please contact the insurance company before making any arrangements. In these cases, the insurance company may pay for most or all of the costs to ship the remains and personal effects.

### **Mortuaries and Funeral homes**

Mortuaries in Montenegro are attached to hospitals. There are some costs for use of cold storage facilities in all mortuary facilities, as well as for those provided in addition by funeral directors or City chapels and are usually calculated per hour. City chapels are available throughout the country and are run by the municipal authorities. They can be arranged for directly and through a funeral director.

## **Issuance of Consular Report of Death Abroad**

The U.S. Embassy in Podgorica is responsible for preparing the Consular Report of Death of a U.S. citizen abroad. This document is accepted in the United States as the legal equivalent of a state death certificate. It is based on the foreign death certificate and cannot be completed until the foreign death certificate is issued.

In order for our Consular section to be able to issue a Consular Report of Death the following documents must be submitted:

- Passport of deceased U.S. citizen
- Hospital's Report of Death (medical document which shows the cause of death)
- Montenegrin Death Certificate
- Notarized DS-5511 - Affidavit for the Surviving Spouse or Next of Kin
- Personal Data sheet filled out by surviving spouse or Next of Kin

## **Special requirements for deaths by infectious disease or under suspicious circumstances.**

Regarding the autopsies from the legal point of view, COVID-19 deaths are assumed as any other death of natural cause. So, the autopsy is not mandatory, except in a case of suspicious medical negligence or malpractice (which is criminal act in Montenegro), or in cases of unknown cause of death, unusual complication or any other unusual medical issue experienced during a medical treatment.

## **Post-Mortem examination (autopsy)**

Under the Montenegrin law, post-mortems are mandatory in the following cases:

- When the person died in a hospital and cause of death is unknown
- Upon request of a doctor who treated the deceased
- When the deceased was brought to the health institution and cause of death is unknown
- Upon request of a doctor assigned to establish the cause of death
- Upon request of a family member of the deceased
- If requested by the investigation authority on the basis of suspicion that the death is caused by a criminal offence or is related to a criminal offence
- When it is of a special relevance for the protection of the public health and from epidemiological and sanitary reasons
- If the death occurred during a diagnostic or therapeutic procedure
- If the deceased was involved in a clinical drug testing or another type of a scientific research
- The cost of autopsy is paid for by the state of Montenegro except in situations 5 and 6 when it has to be the person or the institution requesting the autopsy.

Once the post-mortem examination is completed to the coroner's satisfaction, the coroner will release the body to the family. Members of the immediate family are entitled to a copy of the post-mortem report once it becomes available. The report will be issued in Montenegrin language.

### **Maximum period Before Burial of Remains**

In Montenegro, burial may not take place until 24 hours after death. The period until burial may be extended, particularly if the body is maintained in a refrigerated morgue. Mortuaries in Montenegro are attached to hospitals. There is a fee (per hour) for use of a mortuary facility as well as for those provided in addition by funeral directors or city chapels.

### **Embalming and Exportation of Human Remains**

Embalming is essential if the body is to be entombed above ground or transported overseas. Embalming is only available in Clinical center in the capital of Podgorica. Embalming should be done within 72 hours of death. Embalming is not obligatory if the burial will take place in Montenegro.

Since embalming is not common in Montenegro, it is possible that the result will not be like in the and therefor when a loved one's remains are shipped to the U.S., we recommend that a funeral director in the U.S. determine if the remains are appropriate for viewing.

Shipment of remains to the United States is organized by the local funeral home.

### **Cremation and Exportation of Human Cremains/Ashes**

There are no cremation facilities in Montenegro currently. The nearest crematoriums are in Belgrade and Zagreb. If the next of kin chooses cremation and wishes to take the ashes back to the U.S. themselves, they can do so with assistance of local funeral directors who will be able to arrange the necessary paperwork and transportation. The Urn can also be sent with cargo shipment if NOK is not present in the country.

The wait time, transportation costs, and paperwork for transporting the body out of country, booking cremation appointment can last up to five days for Zagreb and up to 10 for Belgrade.

In the case of cremation, the ashes are placed in an urn inside of a wooden crate.

Most airlines might allow carrying the urn with the ashes as hand luggage or checked luggage. Please check directly with the airline to confirm how ashes can be carried and what paperwork is required. If carried as hand luggage, you will most probably need to take the urn out of the bag for the X-ray.

## **Caskets and Containers**

Caskets and containers are available locally on short notice and can be bought in funeral homes. The quality and price will vary by location, from 300 USD to 800 USD. When remains are to be repatriated to the U.S. or other country the remains must be appropriately prepared or cremated for shipment. The remains will be placed in a sealed coffin with a metal container which cost between 200 USD to 350 USD.

All non-cremated remains must be fully contained within a leak-proof container that is packaged and shipped in accordance with all applicable legal requirements. Germs that can cause disease could be present in the blood or other body fluids of a deceased person even if the stated cause of death is not a contagious disease. Such germs include human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), hepatitis B virus, hepatitis C virus, and other germs that can be present in body fluids. The requirement for leak-proof containers is based on medical [Standard Precautions](#) to prevent exposure to infectious diseases carried in the blood and other body fluids. This requirement is intended to protect the public as well as federal, airline, and airport employees from potential exposure to blood and other body fluids during transportation, inspection, or storage of human remains.

## **Documentation to accompany remains/cremains and repatriation costs**

### **Embalmed Remains:**

- Cancelled passport of deceased U.S. citizen
- Death Certificate from Montenegrin Ministry of Interior
- Embalming certificate issued by the facility where embalming was performed
- Health certificate stating that the remains have no quarantinable diseases, issued by the Department of Health (Ministry of Health)
- Infectious disease certificate issued by Department of Health (Ministry of Health)
- Affidavit by funeral home attesting to contents and embalming and that the casket is hermetically sealed against the escape of microorganisms
- Consular Mortuary Certificate issued by a United States Consular Officer.

### **Cremated remains:**

- Cremation certificate\*; and
- Certificate from the crematory\* stating that the container holds only the cremated remains of the deceased.

**\*\*Both certificates are often included on a single certificate**

## **Costs**

Charges are based on the exchange rate of May 18, 2021: 1.00 USD = 0.823 euro.

The burden to pay all fees associated with repatriation of remains is on the next of kin (NOK). All expenses must be paid in advance unless differently agreed with the undertaker. Fees may vary depending on the services provided. Cost of repatriation of the remains of a deceased will vary depending on where the remains are shipped.

## **Human remains repatriation**

The embalment and repatriation of remains to the U.S. can cost from 5,000 to 10,000 USD depending on destination in the U.S. The cost for interment of remains in Montenegro is approximately 5,000 USD depending on the grave availability and location.

## **Human Ashes**

Cremation and air shipment of ashes to the U.S. is approximately 3,500 USD. In addition to the above, there could be a security surcharge, fuel surcharge, and pickup, handling, and airway bill charges.

## **Exhumation and Shipment**

A request for remains exhumation is submitted by the family with the consent of the holder of the right to use the grave site. To provide this service, the family submitting the request must provide a Decision on Sanitary Consent for Exhumation from the Sanitary Inspection. The Sanitary Inspection service operates under the Ministry of Health.

## **Local Customs Regarding Funerals, Disposition of Remains, Mourning, Memorial Services**

A funeral in Montenegro includes a viewing and a funeral ceremony with a burial in a family grave and periodic memorial services. At the viewing, family and relatives receive condolences. The funeral is usually on the day of viewing or shortly after. These customs are family dependent and may vary.

## **COVID-19**

CDC requirements for importing human remains depend upon if the body has been embalmed, cremated, or if the person died from a [quarantinable communicable disease](#).

At this time, COVID-19 is a quarantinable communicable disease in the United States and the remains must meet the standards for importation found in 42 Code of Federal Regulations Part 71.55 and may be cleared, released, and authorized for entry into the United States only under the following conditions:

- The remains are cremated, OR
- The remains are properly embalmed and placed in a hermetically sealed casket, OR
- The remains are accompanied by a permit issued by the CDC Director. The CDC permit (if applicable) must accompany the human remains at all times during shipment.

Permits for the importation of the remains of a person known or suspected to have died from a quarantinable communicable disease may be obtained through the CDC Division of Global Migration and Quarantine by calling the CDC Emergency Operations Center at 770-488-7100 or emailing [dgmqpolicyoffice@cdc.gov](mailto:dgmqpolicyoffice@cdc.gov).

Please see [CDC's guidance](#) for additional information.